



## PURCHASING SEED FOR CONSERVATION PLANTINGS

### **Be cautious when buying and planting seed, especially for conservation plantings, warns USDA and MDA**

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has encountered issues with seed sold in the state. In 2016 and 2017, the highly invasive weed Palmer amaranth was introduced through conservation seed mixes. The Department also found seed mislabeled with improper information regarding the contents of the mix. These issues are violations of state law.

Minnesota is fortunate to have many reputable seed producers that benefit conservation and pollinator habitat. However, we must be vigilant as we try to better our landscapes.

### ***Advice for those who plan to purchase and plant seed for conservation efforts:***

#### **When selecting a seed vendor:**

- Purchase seed from a reputable company that holds a seed permit from MDA.
- Request the seed label before buying the seed. Be sure the seed has been tested and confirmed free of Palmer amaranth and other prohibited noxious weeds.
- Make sure the origin of the seed meets the requirements of the conservation program in which you are participating.
- Purchase high quality seed; higher the purity and germination percentage, the better.
- Verify the contract with the seeding contractor covers your risks as a landowner. If prohibited noxious weeds are introduced during the project, the vendor should be accountable for the weed eradication.



#### **At planting time:**

- Be on site when planting to ensure the vendor is performing the work agreed to.
- Count the number of bags of each seed source and compare that to the invoice.
- Be aware of the labels. Examine and keep all seed labels used in a specific planting.
- Reject any unlabeled seed.
- If any noxious weed seeds are listed on the label, verify only restricted noxious weed seeds are present at a rate less than 25 seeds per pound.
- Reject any seed with prohibited noxious weed seeds listed on the label.
- Require the seeding contractor provide planting records. The records should note which seed lots were planted in specific locations, the planting procedures used, site preparation, equipment used, and how that equipment was cleaned.
- Retain the invoice and all paperwork for the project.

#### **After planting:**

When the conservation plantings begin to grow, check for the species that should be there. If a plant looks suspicious, contact the MDA's Arrest the Pest line at 888-545-6684 or your County Ag Inspector.

#### **Contact:**

Contact the local conservation staff associated with your specific conservation program should you have any questions or concerns. You may also contact the MDA for advice and assistance by calling Denise Thiede at 651-201-6531 or email at [Denise.Thiede@state.mn.us](mailto:Denise.Thiede@state.mn.us)

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